REMARKS

An excess claim fee payment letter is submitted herewith for four (4) excess independent claims and ten (10) excess total claims.

Claims 1-30 are presently pending in the application. Claims 1-14 have been amended to more particularly define the invention. Claims 15-30 have been added to assure Applicant the degree of protection to which his invention entitles him. Claims 15-30 relate to the method performed by the system of claims 1-12, and so are examinable in the same application.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only to assure grammatical and idiomatic English and improved form under United States practice, and are not made to distinguish the invention over the prior art or narrow the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges that claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12 have been indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims are allowable.

Claims 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen, U.S. Patent No. 5,544,332, in view of Gibson, U.S. Patent No. 6,553,512. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention is directed to a system for enabling, and a method of, facilitated analysis of malfunctions in a computer device which includes a processor unit, a PCI bus, and a plurality of PCI devices connected to the processor unit by the PCI bus. Exemplary embodiments include a PCI bus monitoring circuit. Each PCI device, when operating as a PCI target device, activates a corresponding target operating signal. A target address of a command to be executed on the PCI bus and the target operating signals from the plurality of PCI devices are monitored.

In exemplary embodiments, an error report signal is sent to the processor unit <u>when plural PCI target devices respond in one PCI cycle</u>.

In other exemplary embodiments, the PCI bus is reset <u>when plural PCI target devices respond in one PCI cycle</u>.

In some exemplary embodiments, a corresponding target operating signal is activated when the processor unit is operating as a PCI target device.

In <u>each</u> embodiment, <u>the action</u> of sending an error report signal or of resetting the PCI bus is taken <u>when plural PCI target devices have responded in one PCI cycle</u>.

THE PRIOR ART REFERENCES

The Chen Reference

Chen discloses a method for preventing deadlock in a <u>multi-bus</u> computer system. Chen is concerned with a situation in which a <u>master</u> on one bus attempts to access a <u>slave</u> on a different bus, but a <u>different master</u> on the second bus has been granted control of the <u>slave</u>.

Thus, Chen is concerned about a <u>conflict between two masters</u>.

The Gibson Reference

Gibson discloses a method and an apparatus for resolving CPU deadlocks. Gibson states a deadlock may occur when code makes reference to a non-existent memory, and that one way to resolve deadlocks is to issue an error signal and restart the CPU.

ARGUMENT

The present invention is concerned with the problem of <u>plural PCI target devices</u> responding in one PCI cycle. Neither Chen nor Gibson teaches or suggests action to be taken when <u>plural PCI target device have responded in one PCI cycle</u>. If anything, Chen teaches the opposite -- a <u>conflict between two masters</u>. Gibson teaches a way to resolve a deadlock which occurs when code makes reference to a <u>non-existent memory</u>.

It is accordingly submitted that the claims distinguish patentably from Chen and Gibson, whether considered together or separately, and that the claims are allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-30, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are allowable, and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such action would be appreciated.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number
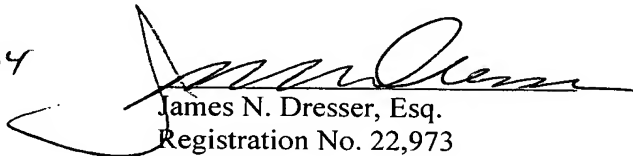
Serial No. 10/051,062
Docket No.: NEG-241 US

listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary for allowance in a telephonic or

personal interview.

To the extent necessary, Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR

§1.136. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency in fees, including

extension of time fees, or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account

No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: _December 27, 2004_

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